



TOWN OF ELLINGTON

Ad Hoc Ellington Trails Committee

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LAUREN DESROCHER
CHAIRMAN

RACHEL DEARBORN
VICE CHAIRMAN

VALERIE AMSEL
PAM MCCORMICK
ERIN STAVENS
LOIS TIMMS-FERRARA
CYNTHIA VAN ZELM
LINDA ANDERSON
JUDI MANFRE
ANN MCLAUGHLIN

AD HOC ELLINGTON
TRAILS COMMITTEE
Meeting Minutes
November 6, 2019
Town Hall Annex

MEMBERS PRESENT: Lauren Desrocher, Rachel Dearborn (left at 7:00 pm), Valerie Amsel (left at 7:00 pm), Pam McCormick, Lois Timms-Ferrara, Linda Anderson, Judi Manfre, Ann McLaughlin

MEMBERS ABSENT: Erin Stavens, Cynthia van Zelm

OTHERS PRESENT: Bruce Dinnie, Tom Palshaw, Rob Zielfelder

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Desrocher called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

II. CITIZENS FORUM

Rob Zielfelder, representing the Conservation Commission, asked if the Committee members present were in support of the Town purchasing a piece of property on Route 83 as open space lands for the Town of Ellington. He stated that it was tabled at a past Board of Selectmen meeting and he is trying to get it back on the agenda and would like some support. He has been working with Lisa Houlihan, Town Planner, who is in favor of the Town purchasing the land as open space. Mr. Zielfelder will be asking First Selectman Lori Spielman to place the topic back on a future Board of Selectmen agenda. Some of the objections to purchasing the property have included concern about hunters because it abuts state land, that people would rather use open space money to fund more athletic fields, that the land is too steep, as well as liability and accessibility issues. Mr. Zielfelder has asked the Committee to compile a list of reasons that the Town should purchase the property and to attend the Board of Selectmen meeting to show support. Mr. Zielfelder also is a member of the Northern Connecticut Land Trust (NCLT) and stated that the land trust cannot pursue purchasing this land due to existing commitments. It was recommended that the Committee look into how to turn the property into forest management land so it could be a possible source of income. Several people expressed interest in walking the property to become more familiar with its qualities.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOVED (ANDERSON), SECONDED (MCCORMICK) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE OCTOBER 2, 2019 MEETING MINUTES.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

A. Power Equipment Training

Those in attendance were asked about their interest in being trained to run power equipment on Town trails; Linda Anderson, Judi Manfre, Lauren Desrocher, Bruce Dinnie, Valerie Amsel, Lois Timms-Ferrara and Rachel Dearborn stated that they were interested in this training. Vice Chairman Dearborn volunteered to send a list of contact information to Mr. Palshaw to arrange this training; Emily Boone, the steward of the Kimball Forest property, will be included in this as well.

B. Storm Damage

Mr. Palshaw reported that about five trees at the Hockanum Trail were cleared after the recent storm. They will need to repair a bench due to storm damage. All the trails are clear.

Chairman Desrocher reported that the Metcalf Trail has sustained extreme storm damage. Several large trees are uprooted mid-trail and others remain suspended in the canopy. Tim Webb, Director of Public Works, will be contracting the tree work out and has provided some signs to close the trail until the work is complete. Mr. Dinnie will be placing a sign at the beginning of the trail that says TRAIL CLOSED. There is no time frame as to when the work will be completed.

Batz damage was minor and has already been taken care of.

No one has checked the Kimball Trail and the Committee has not heard from the steward as to its condition. Mr. Dinnie and Chairman Desrocher are planning to paint the blazes next week and will check on the trail at that time.

C. Trail of Treats Recap

Ms. Anderson said that the event ran more smoothly this year and thanked everyone for their help and support. She stated that the Parks and Recreation Department would like to be more involved next year, as far as paperwork and setup. It is a good way for the Committee to raise funds for future projects, if necessary. Most of the sponsors donated the suggested donation and some donated more. A few sponsors donated but did not participate. Ms. Anderson reported that Dustin Huguenin, Recreation Director, was very impressed with the event. Ms. Timms-Ferrara stated that the Committee received \$1,500 from 35 donations from the 52 sponsors, averaging \$50 per sponsor. Expenses were \$873; most of the expenses, such as safety vests, first aid kits, and lights, will be covered for future years; over half of this cost was the police coverage.

Chairman Desrocher recommended that the Committee vote as to whether or not the event should be held in 2020.

MOVED (MANFRE), SECONDED (TIMMS-FERRARA) AND PASSED [AYE: ANDERSON/AMSEL/DESROCHER/MANFRE/MCLAUGHLIN/TIMMS-FERRARA; ABSTAIN: MCCORMICK/DEARBORN] TO PLAN TO HOST THE THIRD ANNUAL TRAIL OF TREATS EVENT IN 2020.

Ms. Anderson made a list of setup changes including more golf carts and changes to the entrance and waiting line.

V. NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Anderson welcomed the newest member, Ann McLaughlin, to the Committee.

VI. SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Treasurer: There was no further discussion.

B. Planning & Development: The progress of the Moser property will be monitored and reported on in December.

C. Maintenance: Ms. Amsel recommended that a maintenance schedule be put together and a time set aside to clear the entrance to Metcalf when the storm damage has been resolved.


D. Community Outreach: Ms. Anderson will begin looking into someone to lead a "tracking" hike in late winter.

E. Trail of Treats: There was no further discussion.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

MOVED (DESROCHER), SECONDED (MCCORMICK) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADJOURN THE TRAILS COMMITTEE MEETING AT 7:52 PM.

Submitted by


Julia Connor